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Unpad - Ibu Popon Collaboration; a Best Practice in Sustainable Assistance Model for Social Entrepreneurship in Agro-industrial based SME's

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Abstract

Ibu Popon is an Agro-industrial based small and medium-scale enterprises in Majalengka West-Java Indonesia. This enterprise began to be assisted by Unpad for seven years since its establishment in 2007 and initially built as supporting unit of a Pesantren (Islamic Boarding School) and was not projected as a professionally conducted commercial enterprise. Since conducting the assistance process, Ibu Popon has been able to prove that the persistent assistance to small and medium enterprises had generated value added processes through various sequences including created many benefits in various dimensions. The University assistance process had significantly exaggerated the business development and its community through the years. The persistent and sustainable process had significantly affect to the gradual improvement of its business and surrounding community such as in social life quality, women-based empowerment, involving students in entrepreneurship athmosfer, appropriate technology utilization, partnerships and networks elaboration and becoming the locomotive of local fruits commodity. These processes were capable in forming Ibu Popon's social enterprise to have valuable social entrepreneur characteristics such as high empathy, focus on the community, bridging social problems, community transformation mediator, able to develop systematic approach in improving its business, high passion in its business activities, comprehend problems as opportunities, able to provide creative solutions and generate suitable business logic which leads to the ability in creating benefits and continuous innovation process. Some stages in developing Ibu Popon's business were started in increasing self and surrounding community awareness, business development, knowledge transfer, technology transfer, triple helix network elaboration, product development and generate various business based on Ibu Popon's social entrepreneurship capability. At this time Ibu Popon has succeeded in involving various parties which linking upstream and downstream in fruits commodities stakeholders which leads Ibu Popon to be able raise added value to the local fruit commodities. From this sustainable assistance practice can be concluded as a best practice model for the improvement of the agro-based social entrepreneurship.

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1. Introduction

Ibu Popon is an Agro-industrial based small and medium-scale enterprise (SME) located in Majalengka West-Java Indonesia. Ibu Popon is a local brand from a local group of small producers named Asri Rahayu, which have unique development stages compared to other SMEs. At the early stages, Asri Rahayu started by running fruits processing production and grown gradually by conducting variety of business. Ibu Popon had become the icon empowerment process in West Java. These SME has processed fruits into chips, which produced by many groups of local citizen. The chips were made from jackfruits and banana. Ibu Popon also produced other kinds of processed fruits such as dodol guava and mango juice. The special aspects why these products are well marketed were because of its original taste and fragrances. The Ibu Popon brand got significant progress measured from the addition of earnings, capital and their capabilities in managerial and their effort to mastering the technology so Asri Rahayu through its brand “Ibu Popon” able to run a sustainable business innovation process. The model is generated on the basis of empirical findings following the mentoring activities for six years on the object assistance.

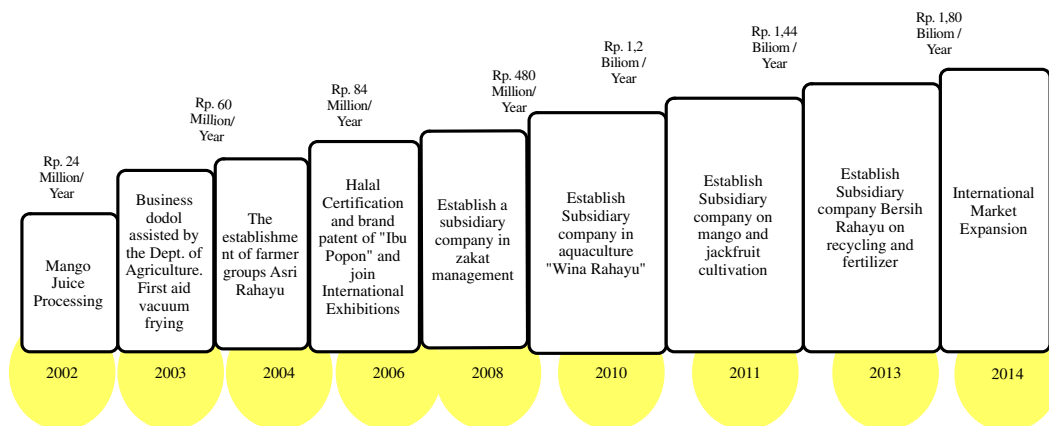


Fig 1. Ibu Popon's SME Business Process Development

2. Social-Entrepreneurship Platform

Asri Rahayu run at the first time as family business founded with the purpose to support the traditional funding of Pesantren (Local Islamic Boarding School) Darul Fallah with 400-500 students. In 2007 Universitas Padjadjaran and The Government of West Java started to provide a guidance and facilitation to mastery the technological and managerial inputs to maintain a sustainable business on Asri Rahayu processes. Ibu Popon was projected to be developed in social-enterprise platform to support Pesantren social activities, especially to develop their existing educational institutions. The expectation was that the boarding school which had a large financing requirement would not necessarily had to rely on social aid funding, therefor the boarding schools could run independently and professionally. Social entrepreneurship-based management was developed with the collaboration of various stakeholders by integrating variety of resources and communities.

3. Community Involvement & Women Group

Empowerment began with the involvement of communities in the production process, product development and marketing. Ibu Popon also involved students as one of the production chain and successfully without exploiting them. In addition to empowering students and other communities including groups of women in the sub-district of Majalengka and then spread to other local areas such as Cirebon, Indramayu and Kuningan (Ciayumajakuning). Other impacts of this empowerment process were highly gained positive feedbacks. Furthermore, Ibu Popon business model that could be replicated specifically on its patterns of learning process in applying appropriate technology and management tools to optimize its business growth. In the other hands, assisting Ibu Popon had another significant benefit for Universitas Padjadjaran, which could be able to absorb and maximize research and conduct technological diffusion and collaborate the process with the creative atmosphere in developing research products. Networking collaboration by involving groups of women in the empowerment process was able to provide a tremendous local economic impact (Purnomo, 2010). Groups of women and students were empowered to be able to collaborate in supplying good quality processed fruits. To perquisite the quality standards, Ibu Popon have made many efforts by involving broader network therefore the products could have a sustainable quality and meet the demand. Involving youth community also became an important variable to optimize the production and marketing process. On the other hands, Ibu Popon also developed large amounts of farmers' and processed products produce community in Ciayumajakuning. These communities maintained good relations consequently keep the supply save.

4. Collaboration Model

Along with the development of its business, Ibu Popon had built an excellent business networking and developed a community-based enterprise development model. Universitas Padjadjaran for more than six years had assistance Ibu Popon persistently and generated the process, which resulted in higher added value through the various stages. This long process assistance through multi-stakeholders collaboration had provided many benefits in a variety of dimensions.

Ibu Popon Agro-industrial Based Social Entrepreneurship Assistance Model

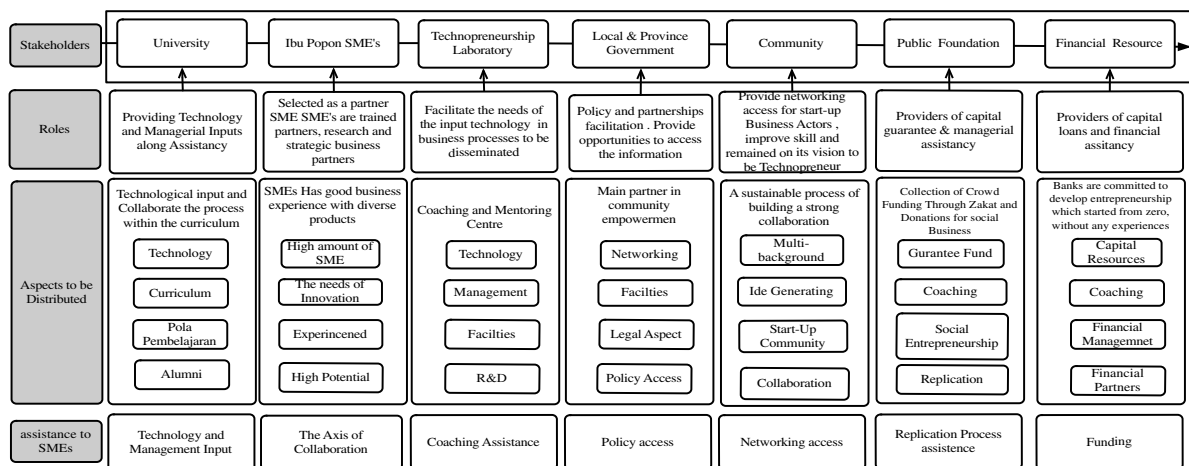


Fig. 2. The Collaboration Model

5. Stakeholders

The main stakeholders of the model consist of Ibu Popon as business owners, Islamic Boarding School and other partners involved in the business. Empowering the resources of business adjacent to the Pondok Pesantren Darul Falah, such as dealing with the production process, marketing and administration, has also been done. Surrounding communities in the region where the production held also involved in the production and supply of raw materials

and in the process it self. Other stakeholders who supported the efforts of Ibu Popon in developing the business consist of the Ministry of Agriculture, Industrial and Trading Agency, Agricultural Training Institute (BAPELTAN), SME Association, Chamber of Commerce and the Ministry of Cooperatives. These stakeholders involved in guiding and fostering the business development such as providing guidance on how to process raw materials, inviting Ibu Popon to participate in many seminars and exhibitions and provide suitable infrastructures for business sustainability. On the other side, the government, assisted in in providing legal authority and helping to get halal label and other legal permit from BPOM and access guarantee in accessing funding from banks.

6. The Icon of Empowerment

The model of collaboration of Ibu Popon currently has grown sustainable and caused high positive impacts on its business. The positive development experienced by the surrounding communities, there were a major positive changes such as the increasing of people welfare. Ibu Popon also has become an icon of local products because this business affected the improving the social life quality in the region including in raising the entrepreneurial spirit throughout the areas.

7. Behavioral Changes

The process that had been running for six years could be analysed by the change of its social entrepreneurship characteristics. Ibu Popon had involved various parties which linking upstream and downstream stakeholders in fruits commodities and giving them many benefits and added value and becoming the locomotive of the local fruits commodity. Along with the development of its business, Ibu Popon also had developed an excellent networking process and became a model of community-based enterprise development. The sustainable assistance by the University for more than six years have proven that if the assistance was done persistently and sustainable could evoke processes that generate a significant added value through the various stages so as to provide benefits in a variety of dimensions. The stages that had been done described as below.

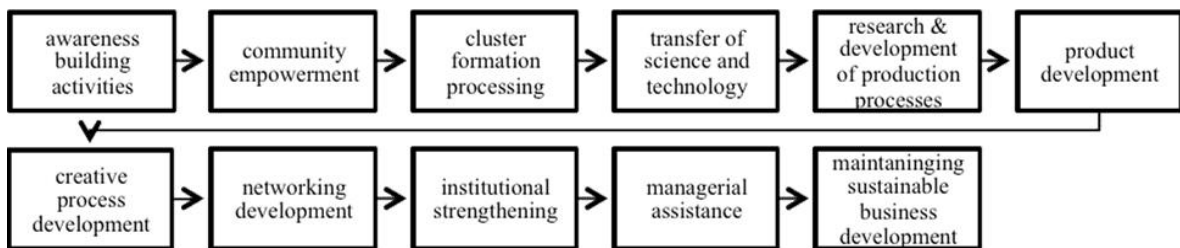


Fig 3. The Assistance Stages

The characteristics of social entrepreneurship that is built up during the process of mentoring in Ibu Popon's SME describe on Fig. 4(a).

8. The Learning Organization

Other stakeholders can replicate Ibu Popon assistance model by applying its learning process patterns in applying appropriate technology and managerial skills to gain optimum business growth. As well as in assisting Ibu Popon, the University was also able to absorb and maximize creative efforts in developing products and develop the quality of research partnership.

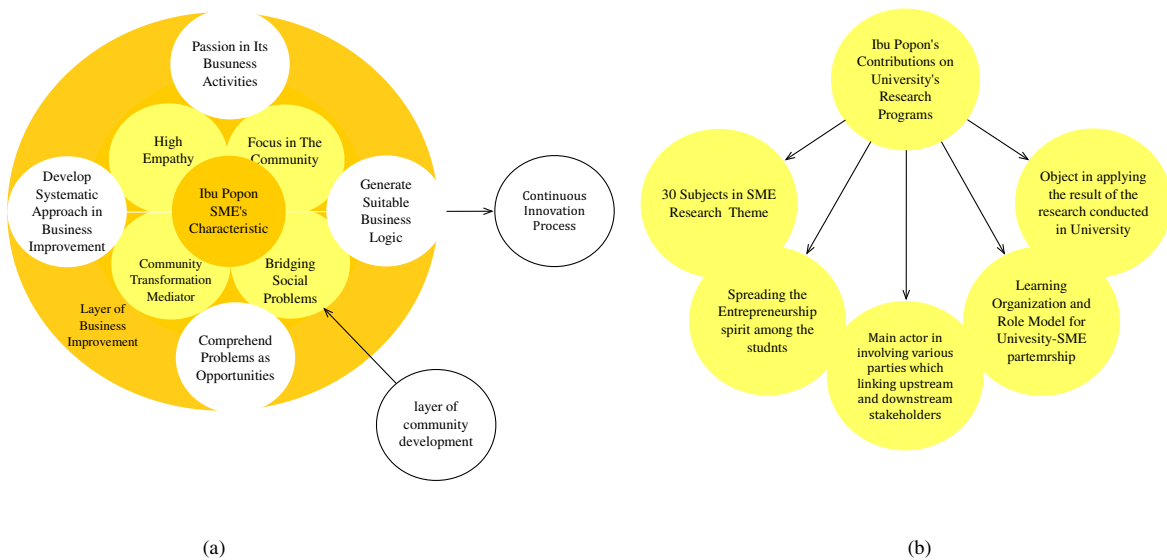


Fig. 4. (a) Ibu Popon SME's characteristics (Efendi, 2014) (b) Ibu Popon Contribution on University's Research Program

9. Conclusion

The assistance model has given a significant added value to Ibu Popon's products and services, especially in its business development. Using this model, the assistance were providing of many job opportunities, provide expertise, insight, experience, creativity, knowledge, skills, cooperation, responsibility, discipline for the students, not only was the increase competency of students in entrepreneurship other than that boarding schools have more points that can be used as value-added for the development of the boarding school. Benefits for the government, especially Majalengka, business Popon Suhaemah has become the locomotive of local economic development, increasing income and local revenue and welfare for local citizen.

Assistance program should be done intensively in a long period of time that is three to five years until the SMEs are able to stand independently. During the process of assistance, SMEs are directed to develop another replication process by coaching other small businesses around their business location. Universities also play a strategic role as a collaborator among stakeholders involved, the University needs to create a clear roadmap in their learning activities; public service and research involving SMEs are nurtured. The networking effort also conducted to identify the various needs of each stakeholder involved.

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